

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8934

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 4663

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS 1

TAGS: PFOR, US, UK, UR, XF

SUBJECT: BRITISH AMBASSADOR'S TALK WITH SYTENKO

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

1. BRITISH AMBASSADOR GARVEY CALLED ON CHIEF OF THE MFA NEAR EAST COUNTRIES DEPARTMENT SYTENKO APRIL 2. SYTENKO WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A GENERAL SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT HE CONVEYED NO SENSE OF URGENCY ABOUT RECONVENING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. HE MADE NO SUGGESTION ABOUT A DATE TO REOPEN THE CONFERENCE. ON THE PARTICIPATION QUESTION, SYTENKO SAID THAT DETERMINATION ABOUT ARAB PARTICIPANTS AT GENEVA WAS UP TO THE ARABS. IN REPLY TO A GARVEY QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER ISRAEL WOULD ATTEND, SYTENKO SAID THAT THIS WAS UP TO
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THE UNITED STATES AND "THE REST OF YOU." SYTENKO WOULD NOT

CONFIRM AN ARAFAT VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION IN THE NEAR FUTURE,
BUT CONCEDED THAT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO SEE ARAFAT SOON.

2. SYTENKO CONFIRMED TO GARVEY THE MAIN LINES OF SOVIET-MIDDLE EAST POLICY, INCLUDING SOVIET SUPPORT FOR THE 1967 BORDERS AND THE SECURITY OF ISRAEL. ASKED IF HE WAS GLAD THAT THE KISSINGER MISSION HAD NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL, HE SAID IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF BEING GLAD. THE SOVIETS HAD ALWAYS MAINTAINED THAT THE PROBLEMS SHOULD BE SOLVED AT GENEVA, HE SAID. IN RESPONSE TO A GARVEY STATEMENT THAT STEP-BY-STEP DIPLOMACY HAD BEEN MORE OR LESS USEFUL, SYTENKO SAID "LESS RATHER THAN MORE" AND IN ANY CASE THE KISSINGER EFFORT IS NOW OVER. ASKED WHETHER THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WOULD BRING REAL PROGRESS, SYTENKO SAID THE SOVIETS FELT THAT THE GOOD INTENTIONS OF THE PARTIES WILL IMPOSE THEMSELVES.

3. ON ISRAEL, SYTENKO SAID TO GARVEY THAT "YOU SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO THE ISRAELIS" THAT TIME IS WORKING AGAINST THEM AND THAT THE ARABS WILL "EAT THEM UP" IF THERE IS NO MOVEMENT. SYTENKO WOULD NOT COMMENT ON ISRAELI-SOVIET RELATIONS. WHEN GARVEY NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS CANNOT TALK DIRECTLY TO THE ISRAELIS, SYTENKO SAID "THAT'S RIGHT."

4. GARVEY ASKED SYTENKO, IN REFERENCE TO VINOGRADOV'S TRIP TO JORDAN, WHY THE SOVIETS WERE NOW TALKING TO JORDAN. SYTENKO WAFFLED SOMEWHAT. HE SAID THAT JORDAN HAS A COMMON FRONTIER WITH ISRAEL AND THAT IT HAS OTHER FRONTIERS AS WELL.

5. ASKED ABOUT SOVIET VIEWS OF THE FAISAL ASSASSINATION, SYTENKO SAID THAT INFORMATION WAS SKETCHY ABOUT WHAT HAD HAPPENED. WHEN GARVEY ASKED IF FAISAL'S DEATH WAS A GOOD THING, SYTENKO DID NOT ANSWER.

6. GARVEY SUMMED UP HIS IMPRESSIONS BY SAYING THAT HE IS STRUCK BY THE RESERVED ATTITUDE OF THE SOVIETS ON THE MIDDLE EAST. HE FEELS THAT IN THE SOVIET VIEW GENEVA IS NOT AT THE BOILING POINT AND THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT TRYING TO ACCELERATE MOVEMENT TO GET THE CONFERENCE RECONVENED. THE SOVIETS RECOGNIZE, IN GARVEY'S VIEW, THAT PROBLEMS EXIST. THIS READING IS QUITE CONSISTENT WITH OUR OWN.
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